

Council of the District of Columbia  
Committee on Human Services  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Room 117, Washington, D.C. 20004

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**THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
TOMMY WELLS, CHAIR**

**ANNOUNCES A PUBLIC HEARING ON**

**THE "SAFE AND STABLE HOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT OF 2007"**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2007 -- 10:00 A.M.**

**THE JOHN WILSON BUILDING  
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.  
ROOM 123  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004**

**Councilmember Tommy Wells, Chair of the Committee on Human Services, announces a Public Hearing on the "Safe and Stable Homes for Children and Youth Act of 2007."** The hearing will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 123 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004.

Councilmember Tommy Wells introduced the "Safe and Stable Homes for Children and Youth Act of 2007." The purpose of the legislation is to amend District law to permit persons other than parents to seek custody of a child when in the child's best interests while recognizing and enforcing the constitutional rights of parents. Thousands of children in the District of Columbia live in households headed by a person other than a parent – a grandparent, another relative, a stepparent, a godparent or someone else fully committed to raising the child. At times, such an arrangement can arise out of dire necessity, such as the deployment of a parent in the military, or the incapacitation of a parent due to illness. In August 2006, the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia issued a sweeping ruling that reversed a long-standing practice of allowing third parties to file for custody of children in their care.

In effect, the ruling now deprives non-parent relatives and other caregivers of standing in custody proceedings. Denying these parties an opportunity to file for custody for children in their care can be contrary to the best interests of the child. This legislation proposes to remedy this situation.

Those who wish to testify should contact Mr. Adam Maier of the Committee on Human Services by e-mail at [amaier@dccouncil.us](mailto:amaier@dccouncil.us) or by telephone at (202) 724-8035 by

Tuesday, February 6, 2007. E-mail contacts to Mr. Maier should include the full name, title, and affiliation -- if applicable -- of the person(s) testifying. Witnesses should bring 15 copies of their written testimony to the hearing. Representatives of organizations will be allowed a maximum of five (5) minutes for oral presentation and individuals will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes for oral presentation.

If you are unable to testify at the hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record. Copies of written statements should be submitted to the Secretary to the Council, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 5, Washington, D.C. 20004, no later than 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 14, 2007.